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Some of them are not referred to in the text at all. At least in one instance text and illustration differ, in two instances the text declares the subject of the illustration to be half fabulous. The sin against the historical sense is considerably increased by the fact that many of the illustrations were made to order by artists employed by the publishers.

But the chief grievance of the student is the omission of footnotes and references, due to the wishes of the publishers, "in deference," as Professor Sloane confesses, "to what seems to be the present taste of the reading public." In a life of Napoleon that claims to be in part based on original investigation by the author and for the remaining part on the results of the most recent research, this omission is unpardonable. Nor is the bibliography at the end of the fourth volume a recompense; for such a general bibliography in a work of this kind is not of the slightest use to the reading public, and its alphabetical arrangement injures its value for students. A bibliography of the life and times of Napoleon that is not arranged by periods or subjects, with critical comments and explanations, is no better than a section of a card-catalogue. Professor Sloane might well have taken Fournier for his model, and in giving to his bibliography a scientific arrangement have made up to students in some degree for the sins of his publishers.

CHARLES M. ANDREWS.

Souvenirs d'un Historien de Napoléon. Mémorial de J. de Norvins, publié avec un avertissement et des notes par L. DE LANZAC DE LABORIE, (1768-1810). (Paris : E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie. 1896, 1897. Three vols., pp. xxxvi, 436 ; 418 ; 356.)

THERE have been many writers whose fame is assured not by the books written for publication on which they based their claims to the recognition of their contemporaries and of posterity, but by comparatively careless reminiscences composed in old age telling of the things that they had seen and the deeds that they had done. Norvins is one of these. Though a voluminous author in his time and one who wrote well on many subjects, his literary fame has long passed away. His *Histoire de Napoléon* was an immensely successful book in its day and is said to have passed through twenty-two editions within a few years after its publication. But it is now relegated to the category of books which lie on the stall of the open-air second-hand book-seller on the *quais* of Paris and which only the indiscriminating book-buyer dares to purchase. And in truth, it deserves its fate. Written as it was by an ardent admirer of Napoleon, without any historical sense or historical training, it never had any value as a history, but served rather to fan the growing wave of Napoleon-worship which eventually placed the nephew of the great emperor upon the throne of France as the inheritor of the glories of the Napoleonic legend. A certain grace of style which Norvins undoubtedly possessed made the book readable at the time of its publication, but now that the perspective of time has placed the career of Napoleon in a different

light, while new sources of authority are being constantly made accessible, the old-fashioned, indiscriminate eulogy has fallen into general disrepute. The other works of Norvins never had more than an ephemeral interest, and his place among French writers of the nineteenth century would have been low indeed had not the publication of these memoirs half a century after his death given him rank with the most delightful of French memoir-writers.

The French nation excels all others in the perfection of the autobiographical literature which forms so important a characteristic of its literary production. The perennial interest of French history lies largely in the fact of the adaptability of the people or of the language for personal reminiscence. Every period in it is illustrated by a wealth of memoirs. While other countries have, indeed, plenty of documentary material from which their history can be studied, for no country but France does there exist an equal amount of readable personal recollections. It is within the last few years that there have been issuing from the press of Paris numerous memoirs of the great Revolution and of the First Empire which prove that that period is to be as clearly interpreted by eye-witnesses for future generations as the seventeenth century is by the memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, Madame de Motteville and the Duc de Saint-Simon. Foremost among these memoirs stand those of Marbot and Thiébault, and to them must now be added the *Mémorial* of Norvins.

The first striking point of these memoirs is the air and tone of good society which pervades them. It is not surprising to hear that Norvins was in his day considered one of the most charming conversationalists in Paris. Anecdote follows anecdote with easy grace, descriptions of individuals are touched off with happy phrases that make the subjects of them live again, and the rules of good-breeding are never broken. Part of the charm of Norvins lies in his amiability; he is never malignant even towards those who injured him, and relates his own want of success in the career of life when friends with less reputation for wit and brains than himself were rising to high office, with a half-pitying laugh at his own misfortunes and an evident desire not to bore his readers over-much with the realities of his life. Ever moving in the best society, welcomed alike in the salons of the *ancien régime*, of the Consulate and of the Empire, Norvins met every one worth knowing during his time and retained a clear picture of them and their surroundings. Born in 1769, in the same year as the famous Corsican, who was to do so little for his advancement, of a wealthy family, which had held high official positions during the eighteenth century and had intermarried with many celebrated houses, Norvins had time to study the society of the old French monarchy at the eve of its dissolution. How charming that society was is known from other writers, but nowhere is it pictured with such kindly fidelity as in the memoirs of the young man who was permitted a brief glimpse of its felicity just before the Revolution dispersed that gracious society over all the countries of Europe. The picture of life at the Château of Brienne, for instance, is in its way a master-piece

of that most difficult art, the portraiture of society, and Norvins lingers lovingly over the recollections of his youth as a successful *débutant* in that most polished circle. When he was twenty years old, the States-General met and the age of the French Revolution succeeded that of the Bourbon monarchy. With ever-growing interest, the young man watched the rising of the storm which was to sweep the Bourbon monarchy and its high-bred society out of existence and he resigned his position as judge at the Châtelet after the condemnation of Favras under the threats of the mob. In 1791, like all young men of good breeding and with pretensions to good society, he left France to join the army of the émigrés under the command of the Prince de Condé. Norvins has left two pictures of the emigration, and whenever the history of the exiles who left France at the time of her distress comes to be written worthily, his pages must be largely used. His first experience was with the army of Condé or of the princes, as it is commonly called, and the fate of that ill-starred attempt of the young noblesse of France to aid in the subversion of the hopes of France, is vividly depicted. The second picture of the emigration deals with the life of those French émigrés who found an asylum in Switzerland. In some ways, the life there was not so striking as the life of the émigrés in England or in Germany, but Norvins saw revived again the society of Paris in the Swiss cantons. It was there too that he made the acquaintance of Madame de Staël, of whom he writes in as enthusiastic admiration as of her enemy Napoleon. Returning to Paris in 1797 before his name had been withdrawn from the list of the émigrés, his life was soon placed in the greatest peril. He was denounced to the authorities; his life was only spared owing to the interposition of Madame de Staël with the Directors; and he spent the two years from 1797 to the establishment of the Consulate in 1799 in the prison of La Force. Naturally he hailed with joy the *coup d'état* of 18 Brumaire and was ready to worship at the shrine of the Corsican general who had opened the doors of his prison. For a moment, under the Consulate, Norvins seemed likely to win place and power, but he recklessly threw his chances away and embarked for San Domingo with General Leclerc. Norvins survived the terrible catastrophe which destroyed Leclerc's army and did good service according to his own account, which is supported by authentic documents, in the French attempt to recover possession of its former West Indian colonial headquarters. Perhaps this portion of Norvins' memoirs is of the greatest historical value, for there are other accounts of the society of old France and of the emigration, but there exists no such vivid narration of the unfortunate San Domingo expedition as is contained in the last part of the second and in the first part of the third volumes of Norvins' *Mémorial*. The friend of Leclerc soon found that his services in San Domingo did not commend him to the favor of the First Consul, for as he himself says, Napoleon never liked to be reminded of a failure. Therefore, in desperation, after enjoying for some months the pleasures of the social life of Paris in which he shone, the brilliant wit at the age of eight and thirty suddenly enlisted in a *corps d'élite*,

which it was rumored the Emperor intended to organize into a noble body-guard after the fashion of the *ancien régime*. This gave Norvins an opportunity of seeing service with the Grande Armée and he describes, not indeed with the soldier-like enthusiasm of Marbot, but with the somewhat indifferent interest of an amateur, the campaign of Friedland in 1807. Since his brief taste of military life did not promise swifter promotion than his experience as a civilian, Norvins refused a commission in the army and entered the service of Napoleon's youngest brother Jerome, the king of Westphalia. The personalities of the little German court are brilliantly depicted, but the theatre was too small for the ambition of Norvins and he speedily abandoned Jerome in the hope of at last receiving a satisfactory place from Napoleon. In 1810, he was appointed director-general of the police of Rome, but the chapters of the *Mémorial* dealing with his sojourn there are, with the exception of a few pages dealing with Fouché's brief appearance in 1814, unfortunately lost. The *Mémorial* then terminates to all intents and purposes with the appointment of Norvins to his Roman post.

What, it may be asked, is the historical value of these reminiscences of M. de Norvins? It will be seen that he had plenty of opportunities of studying great men and witnessing great events. But he observed them not with the eye of a statesman or of a political philosopher; he throws no new light that can be relied on upon the actual framing of policy or the responsibility for measures; he was never enough on the inside to learn how the mainspring worked. But from the point of view of a well-bred man of the best society and of a keen observer of men and women, he has left a picture of unrivalled vivacity and brightness of many phases of bygone life. Norvins knew his world, the world of society, perfectly; no one was ever better fitted than he to judge of social politics, and it is as a kindly and witty gentleman that he writes of the experiences of his life. He does not give us indeed the life of the Grande Armée as Marbot has imperishably described it; but he gives us a different point of view of the same period, just as characteristically and typically French. A word of praise should be said for the excellent editing and admirable notes of M. de Lanzac de Laborie, which greatly enhance the value of the most delightful book of memoirs which has appeared in France since the publication of the memoirs of the Baron de Marbot.

H. MORSE STEPHENS.

Murat, Lieutenant de l'Empereur en Espagne (1808), d'après sa Correspondance inédite et des Documents originaux. Par le Comte MURAT. (Paris: F. Plon, Nourrit et Cie. 1897. Pp. xi, 478.)

THIS volume is incontestably the most valuable contribution to the history of the First Empire which has been published during the last twelve months. Its value is due, not only to the careful analysis of docu-